

TENDENTIOUS TEXTS:
HOLOCAUST REPRESENTATIONS AND NATION-REBUILDING IN EAST GERMAN,
ITALIAN, and WEST GERMAN SCHOOLBOOKS, 1949-1989

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ABSTRACT

Daniela R. P. Weiner: Tendentious Texts: Holocaust Representations and Nation-Rebuilding in East German, Italian, and West German Schoolbooks, 1949-1989
(Under the direction of Konrad H. Jarausch and Karen Auerbach)

This thesis examines how post-fascist countries—East Germany, Italy, and West Germany—represented the Second World War and the Holocaust in middle school history textbooks.

History textbooks were important actors in the creation of new democratic communities in East Germany, Italy, and West Germany. Through a transnational comparison of one leading textbook published in each country, this paper answers *why* and *how* West Germany was eventually more successful than East Germany and Italy in conveying its youth with a more nuanced and self-critical national memory of the Second World War and the Holocaust. This paper also shows *how* West German textbooks both reflected and contributed to this relative success. Such knowledge is imperative, not just to understand the past, but also to provide a better grasp of how to democratize youth in the future—an important topic given the specter of right-wing ethno-nationalism that has seen a revival in recent years.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CD	Christian Democracy (Republic of Italy)
CDU	Christian Democratic Union (West Germany)
FDP	Free Democratic Party (West Germany)
GEI	Georg Eckert Institute of International Textbook Research
KMK	<i>Kulturministerkonferenz</i> ; The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (West Germany)
KPD	Communist Party of Germany (Weimar Germany)
NKFD	National Committee for a Free Germany (Nazi Germany)
PCI	Communist Party of Italy (Republic of Italy)
PSI	Socialist Party of Italy (Republic of Italy)
RSI	Italian Social Republic; Republic of Salò (1943-1945)
SED	Socialist Unity Party (East Germany)
SPD	Socialist Party of Germany (West Germany)

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INTRODUCTION: THE PROBLEM OF THE YOUTH

“We are the cheerful Hitler Youth
we don’t need any Christian truth
...Priests can do whatever they want,
But we’ll be Hitler’s boys till death;”

-Sang by the *Hitlerjugend* (September 1934)¹

After the Second World War, the post-fascist states of East Germany, West Germany, and the Republic of Italy faced a problem: their youth. After years of marching, uniforms, and propaganda in the fascist youth organizations *Hitlerjugend*, the *Opera Nazionale Balilla*, and the *Gioventù Italiana del Littorio*, the youth of these countries had to be “defascistized.” “Hitler’s boys till death” had to be turned into good democratic citizens; one of the primary ways of accomplishing this was through the school system. Although the governmental system had changed, the state’s focus on the youth had not.

When one thinks of the problem of fascistized youth, the *Hitlerjugend* usually comes to mind. One rarely thinks of Italy. This is because Italy has largely not been regarded as complicit in the Holocaust and, as a result, its fascism has been characterized as less destructive.² While most historians have acknowledged that the successor states of Third Reich Germany were responsible for the Second World War and the Holocaust, Italy has largely been portrayed as a bystander or a rescuer. Nevertheless, Italian youth had been “fascistized” for far longer than

¹ As quoted in Alessio Ponzio, *Shaping the New Man: Youth Training Regimes in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany*, *George L. Mosse Series in Modern European Cultural and Intellectual History* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2015), 92.

² For example: Jonathan Steinberg, *All or Nothing: The Axis and the Holocaust, 1941-1943*, 2 ed. (London: Routledge, 2002); Renzo De Felice, *The Jews in Fascist Italy: A History*, trans. Robert L. Miller (New York: Enigma Books, 2015; repr., 3).

German youth had; the Fascist Academy began its sixth school year before Adolf Hitler was even appointed Reich Chancellor.³ Additionally, the fascist-era Kingdom of Italy, like Nazi Germany, entered World War II out of a desire for territorial aggrandizement.⁴ It independently adopted antisemitic legislation and created detainment camps to hold Jews (as well as other “dangerous individuals”) both on the peninsula and in occupied territories from 1939 to 1943. Its successor, the fascist Italian Social Republic (RSI) rounded up, interned, and deported Italian Jews from 1943 to 1945.⁵ Although Fascist Italy was clearly not responsible for the Holocaust to the same degree that Germany was, Italian citizens and the Italian government supported policies that facilitated its execution. Thus, East Germany, West Germany, and the Republic of Italy all had to deal with both a home-grown fascist legacy and Holocaust complicity as they looked to rebuild their countries in the postwar era.⁶

Analyses of national memory of the Holocaust in post-fascist countries have generally drawn on sources that influenced adults’ public life—political speeches, film and television, and commemorative sites.⁷ But these analyses have failed to consider how postwar states attempted

³ Ponzio, 75.

⁴ Davide Rodogno, "Fascism and War," in *The Oxford Handbook of Fascism*, ed. R. J. B. Bosworth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 248-52.

⁵ For more on Italian antisemitic legislation and use of concentration camps, please see: Michele Sarfatti, *The Jews in Mussolini's Italy: From Equality to Persecution*, trans. John and Anne C. Tedeschi., *George L. Mosse Series in Modern European Cultural and Intellectual History* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006). Davide Rodogno, *Fascism's European Empire: Italian Occupation During the Second World War*, trans. Adrian Belton (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006). Alexis Herr, *The Holocaust and Compensated Compliance in Italy: Fossoli Di Carpi, 1942-1952* (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

⁶ The Italian situation makes clear the fallacy of dividing individuals into clear-cut categories of perpetrators, victims, and bystanders; the distinction between these three was often blurred.

⁷ For examples see: Aline Sierp, *History, Memory, and Trans-European Identity: Unifying Divisions* (New York: Routledge, 2014); Jon Berndt Olsen, *Tailoring Truth: Politicizing the Past and Negotiating Memory in East Germany, 1945-1990* (New York: Berghahn, 2015); Harold Marcuse, *Legacies of Dachau: The Uses and Abuses of a Concentration Camp, 1933-2001* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Mark A. Wolfgram, "Getting History Right" : *East and West German Collective Memories of the Holocaust and War* (Lewisburg: Bucknell

to educate their more impressionable youth. School history textbooks, which were governmentally approved unlike many of the above-cited sources, offer stronger evidence in the study of how postwar states presented the national past. Although there was a five year gap (1945-1950) during which paper shortages and the need for a drastic overhaul of school texts delayed production, history textbook narratives, for the most part, were both accurate barometers of and influential mediums for the strategies utilized by governments to portray the national past. For children born in the immediate postwar generation, textbooks were authoritative sources on the past; there was little else about the Holocaust in the surrounding culture. As subsequent cohorts of youth passed through the school system—children that had not lived through the wartime years and had only heard whispers or stories from elders—a greater variety of educational media became available, such as films, museums, concentration camp educational centers. Yet, textbooks still retained their preeminence, because they, for the most part, contained the information upon which students were tested.⁸ Textbooks responded not only to governments' attempts to shape their youth, but also to young people and their search for explanation and guidance. Textbook narratives were acted upon by a constellation of influences, including governments, authors, teachers, students, parents, and occupation forces. Furthermore, textbooks stood at the crossroads of historiography and public memory. They were influenced by both historiography and public memory, and influenced them both, in turn.

Italian and East German history textbooks and their narratives surrounding the Second World War have been understudied. Italian textbooks' portrayals of the Second World War and

University Press, 2011). Rebecca Clifford, *Commemorating the Holocaust: The Dilemmas of Remembrance in France and Italy*, First edition. ed., *Oxford Historical Monographs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁸ That is not to say that the official textbook narrative was the only one to which students were exposed; history was also transmitted to German children in family contexts, as well. Harald Welzer, "Collateral Damage of History Education: National Socialism and the Holocaust in German Family Memory," *Social Research* 75, no. 1 (2008), <http://search.proquest.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/docview/209670550/fulltextPDF?accountid=14244>.

the Holocaust have been particularly ignored in the scholarship, with the exception of Luigi Cajani's, Anna Ascenzi's, Milena Santerini's, and Antonio Gioia's works. Furthermore, their works have been either relatively brief in their treatment of textbook representations of Holocaust complicity and resistance or have been limited temporally in their focus.⁹ Italy has also been mostly left out of comparative textbook analyses.¹⁰ Analysis of East German schoolbooks has also been relatively sparse. Despite admirable contributions by John Rodden, Gregory Wegner, Daniel Levy and Julian B. Diekes most historians and pedagogues prefer to focus on the West German case, perhaps because the East German case is seen as relatively stagnant and invariable over time.¹¹ Indeed, West German textbooks and their historical coverage of World War II and the Holocaust have been considered by many historians. Recent studies have characterized West German textbooks as improving over time. They have depicted the textbooks as increasingly successful in introducing young readers to a self-critical approach and

⁹ Luigi Cajani, "Italian History Textbooks on the Brink of the Twenty-First Century," in *School History Textbooks across Cultures: International Debates and Perspectives*, ed. Jason Nicholls, Oxford Studies in Comparative Education (Didcot: Symposium, 2006); Milena Santerini, "Holocaust Education in Italy," *Intercultural Education* 14, no. 2 (2003); Antonio Gioia, *Guerra, Fascismo, Resistenza : Avvenimenti E Dibattito Storiografico Nei Manuali Di Storia* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2012); Anna Ascenzi, *Education and the Metamorphoses of Citizenship in Contemporary Italy* (Macerata: EUM, 2009).

¹⁰ Notable exceptions include: Deutsch-Italienische Historikertagung, *Von der Diktatur zur Demokratie; Deutschland und Italien in der Epoche nach 1943. Referate der 9. Deutsch-Italienischen Historikertagung, Salerno, 15.-17. Juni 1971* (Braunschweig: A. Limbach, 1971); Italienisch-Deutsche Historiker-Tagung, *Faschismus, Nationalsozialismus : Ergebnisse und Referate der 6. Italienisch-Deutschen Historiker-Tagung in Trier* (Braunschweig: A. Limbach, 1963); Jason Nicholls, "Are Students Expected to Critically Engage with Textbook Perspectives of the Second World War? A Comparative and International Study," *Research in Comparative and International Education* 1, no. 1 (2006), <http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/rcie.2006.1.1.5>.

¹¹ John Rodden, *Textbook Reds: Schoolbooks, Ideology, and Eastern German Identity* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006); Gregory Wegner, "The Power of Selective Tradition: Buchenwald Concentration Camp and Holocaust Education for Youth in the New Germany," in *Censoring History: Citizenship and Memory in Japan, Germany, and the United States*, ed. Laura Hein and Mark Selden, Asia and the Pacific (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2000). Wolfgang Meseth, "Education after Auschwitz in a United Germany: A Comparative Analysis of the Teaching of the History of National Socialism in East and West Germany," *European Education* 44, no. 3 (Fall 2012): 17; Daniel and Julian B. Diekes Levy, "Institutionalising the Past: Shifting Memories of Nationhood in German Education and Immigration Legislation," in *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe Studies in the Presence of the Past*, ed. Jan-Werner Müller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Bodo von Borries, "The Third Reich in German History Textbooks since 1945," *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 1 (2003): 46, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022009403038001963>.

public complicity in the Holocaust. Scholars have considered West German textbooks, both in individual studies and in comparative analyses with various countries—including France, Israel, the United Kingdom, and the United States— but almost never with Italy.¹² There have also been a couple of short East German-West German comparisons.¹³

Yet, West Germany's comparative partners with the exception of East German) have shed little light on how perpetrator nations deal with guilt and complicity. This has led to an incomplete understanding of *why* and *how* West Germany was eventually more successful than other perpetrator countries in providing their youth with a more nuanced and self-critical view of the Second World War and the Holocaust. Currently, we also have little understanding of *how* West German textbooks both reflected and contributed to this relative success. Such knowledge is imperative, not just in order to understand the past, but also to provide a better grasp of how to democratize youth in the future—an important topic given the specter of right-wing ethno-nationalism that has seen a revival in recent years. A transnational comparison of perpetrator countries with similar preconditions, who were forced to democratize after the war, allows us to

¹²For individual studies, please see: Jürgen Redhardt, *NS-Zeit im Spiegel des Schulbuchs; Konzeptionen und Fehlkonzeptionen für Westdeutsche Schüler, Dargestellt am hessischen Beispiel* (Frankfurt/Main: Röderberg-Verlag, 1970); Brian M. Puaca, *Learning Democracy: Education Reform in West Germany, 1945-1965, Monographs in German History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009); Brian M. Puaca, "Mastering the Past? Nazism and the Holocaust in West German Textbooks of the 1960s," in *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice*, ed. Zehavit Gross and Doyle Stevick (Cham: Springer, 2015); Falk Pingel, "From Evasion to a Crucial Tool of Moral and Political Education: Teaching National Socialism and the Holocaust in Germany," in *What Shall We Tell the Children?: International Perspectives on School History Textbooks*, ed. Stuart J. Foster and Keith A. Crawford (Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing, 2006). For comparative works, please see: Randolph L. Braham, ed. *The Treatment of the Holocaust in Textbooks: The Federal Republic of Germany, Israel, the United States of America* (Boulder: Social Science Monographs, 1987); Keith Crawford and Stuart J. Foster, *War, Nation, Memory: International Perspectives on World War II in School History Textbooks, Research in Curriculum and Instruction* (Charlotte: Information Age, 2008); Bertrand Léureur, *Enseigner le nazisme et la shoah : Une étude comparée des manuels scolaires en Europe* [s.l.]: V&R unipress, 2012). Jason Nicholls has utilized Italy in his comparative studies, but a very small sample size was used and only textbooks published in the 1990s were considered. Otherwise, when Italy does appear in comparative analyses, it is usually in an isolated chapter in an edited volume. Please see: Nicholls; Cajani, in *School History Textbooks across Cultures: International Debates and Perspectives*.

¹³ East-West German comparison studies include: Meseth; von Borries.

examine how these textbook narratives supported nation-rebuilding currents and how that process varied based on ideological settings. While the East-West German comparison allows us to evaluate the role that governmental ideology played in Holocaust education, the German-Italian comparison allows us to determine how postwar uncertainty over perpetrator status influenced educational policies.

History textbooks were important actors in the creation of new democratic communities in East Germany, West Germany, and Italy. The schoolbooks provided some description of the fascist past, identified what was perceived as having gone wrong, and prescribed remedies, moral judgments, and rehabilitated institutions that could be used in the future. The textbooks offer access to a series of crucial questions that have not yet been addressed in scholarship about these countries: Who were identified as the victims of the Holocaust? Who were the perpetrators? Who were portrayed as resisting the Nazis? These schoolbooks did not emerge in a vacuum; instead, they were very much in dialogue with the countries' domestic and geopolitical interests, and representations of victims, perpetrators, and resisters shifted accordingly.

Both East Germany and Italy were able to deflect guilt by blaming an "other." East Germany largely presented its narrative through an ideological *socialist lens*. It blamed West German capitalists for wartime atrocities and touted the wartime persecution and resistance of communists across Central and Eastern Europe. Italy presented its account through a *patriotic lens*, externalizing guilt to the German people and taking comfort in a hardy national resistance narrative. West Germany faced the greatest challenge. Encountering difficulty conjuring up an external culpable "other," West Germany contorted itself trying to explain how the Holocaust had happened. Like the other two countries in question, West Germany employed a hearty resistance narrative, crafted in an effort to find something in the wartime past upon to justify the

foundations of the postwar state. Although West Germany, like the other two countries, attempted to use this resistance narrative to deflect guilt, the lack of an external “other” in the West German case meant that the state had to engage in deeper self-reflection and self-criticism than in the other two countries. Eventually, West Germany had to admit that the guilty parties were still among the general population, in a more *malleable lens*. Consideration of the simpler (but also far less studied) textbook narratives of East Germany and Italy in an international framework sheds new light on the more complex West German case.

A three-country comparison is an enormous undertaking. To make it a more manageable one, I selected one textbook published in each country and analyzed how the various editions of these textbooks changed over time. In picking textbooks for the case studies, I made a conscious effort to select schoolbooks that were utilized in comparable school levels/age groups in each of the three unique educational systems. All three case studies focus on middle school textbooks, used in the equivalent of the American 8th or 9th (and occasionally 10th) grades. While the East German and Italian school systems had unified middle schools (with all students in the country attending the same type of school), the West German school structure, with its division of students into different track as early as grade 5, posed a practical problem. For the West German case study, I chose a textbook utilized in the highest track of schooling (for students who planned to continue their studies at the university level), the *Gymnasium*, since the political and intellectual elite of the country were likely educated using these texts. With the parameters for the schoolbooks thus defined, I selected one textbook that was prolifically republished and had many editions from each country on which to conduct an in depth analysis. My reason for doing so was twofold: firstly, because it allowed me to consider change over time within these texts; and secondly, because continued re-publication indicated that these textbooks were popular and

had a relatively large readership. Lastly, while textbook narratives were certainly not the only factors shaping postwar education— teacher attitudes and training also clearly played major roles— this paper will confine itself to a consideration of textbooks.

Textbook Production Processes

In East Germany, there was only one textbook utilized for the entire country, printed by the state-controlled central publishing house *Volk und Wissen Volkseigener Verlag* (called *Volk und Wissen Verlag*).¹⁴ In the immediate aftermath of World War II, both the Western Allies and the Soviet Union judged Nazi-era textbooks to be unusable, and even Weimar-era textbooks to be proto-fascist. The Soviet Military Administration of Germany created its own textbooks, which were printed by *Volk und Wissen Verlag* for use in the 1945/6 school year. However, paper shortages and political sea changes in both occupied Germany and in the Soviet Union meant that these textbooks were only produced for science and mathematics and were only for the primary grades.¹⁵ *Volk und Wissen Verlag* published the first contemporary history textbook for middle school textbooks in 1952—*Lehrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht, 8. Schuljahr*—which was only slightly revised in 1953 and abridged in 1956. In 1960, the *Lehrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* seems to have been replaced by *Geschichte Lehrbuch für Klasse 9*, and the study of contemporary history moved from Grade 8 to Grades 9 and 10. Unique revisions of the *Geschichte* text appeared in 1965, 1970, 1983, and 1988, with reprints published each year. All of these East German middle school history textbooks appear to have been written by committee.

¹⁴ Rodden, xxiii, 2-3, 112, 22. von Borries, 46.

¹⁵ Rodden, 2.

Therefore, only six unique editions of the middle-school contemporary history textbook were produced over the course of East Germany's existence and all six will be considered over the course of this paper.¹⁶

The postwar Italian school system was also centralized, but mechanisms existed that allowed for a great deal of local variation. In Italy, the Federal Ministry of Education set the curriculum, but editors and authors collaborated to write the textbooks. School committees—made up of teachers, parents, and students—chose which textbooks were selected for each school. Therefore, the textbooks that were utilized varied from school to school or even from class to class.¹⁷ This plurality would be a hallmark of Italian and West German textbooks and a distinguishing factor from their East German counterparts. Although Italian textbooks, as a whole, appeared to have been revised and republished less frequently than West German ones, Raffaello Morghen's *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea* was an outlier in this regard. First appearing in April 1951, it had nine editions by January 1963. Although its publication history between the 1960s and 1980s is unclear, an updated version of the same text from 1989 has been preserved, suggesting that it was continuously revised and reprinted during this time period.¹⁸ Perhaps its success was due to its relatively centrist, neutral tone; aside from trumpeting democratic ideals, the textbook did not pay explicit homage to any particular ideology or political party. *Civiltà europea*'s longevity and many reproductions suggested it as the basis for the Italian case study.

¹⁶ Ibid., xxiii, 2-3.

¹⁷ Cajani, in *School History Textbooks across Cultures: International Debates and Perspectives*, 37.

¹⁸ Raffaello Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 9 ed., vol. 3, *Civiltà europea: corso di storia per le scuole media superiori* (Palermo: G. B. Palumbo, 1963).

During the mid to late 1940s, West German history textbooks, like their East German counterparts, also faced strong state oversight. During the occupation period, the United States supervised West German rebuilding efforts in many spheres, including the educational one. Officials from the Office of Military Government, United States discovered that both Nazi-era and Weimar-era schoolbooks were imbued with militarism, nationalism and racism and so edited them to decrease these problematic aspects. In 1946, the United States military government created nine Curriculum and Textbooks Centers (renamed Education Services Centers in 1948) to help German pedagogues write new textbooks designed to inculcate young Germans with democratic ideals.¹⁹

Once West Germany was founded in 1949 and the occupying powers relinquished educational oversight, a new structure for the educational system developed. The new West German system had little of the top-down structural simplicity that characterized the East German dictatorship. The *Kulturministerkonferenz* (KMK), a federal committee composed of representatives from each West German state, put forth recommendations for textbook composition.²⁰ Each West German state then promulgated its own guidelines, influenced by those of the KMK. Textbooks were composed by teams of academics or teachers, who submitted finished manuscripts to the more than 80 textbook publishers in West Germany.²¹ These textbooks had to be approved by the individual West German states before they could be used in

¹⁹Puaca, *Learning Democracy: Education Reform in West Germany, 1945-1965*, 15, 80-89; Steven Finnegan White, "Italian Popular Education between Fascism and Democracy, 1943-1954 : The Work and Legacy of the Allied Control Commission Education Subcommittee" (University of Virginia, 1985), 287.

²⁰ The English translation of the *Kulturministerkonferenz* is the "Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs."

²¹ Walter F. Renn, "Federal Republic of Germany: Germans, Jews and Genocide," in *The Treatment of the Holocaust in Textbooks: The Federal Republic of Germany, Israel, the United States of America*, ed. Randolph L. Braham, Mazal Holocaust Collection (Boulder: Columbia University Press, 1987), 5-6.

the classroom. Teachers were allowed to pick which textbooks they wished to use in their own classroom from the state-approved list.²² As a result, there were 20-30 textbooks on the market in West Germany at any one moment, and somewhere between 150 and 180 textbooks produced from 1949 to 1990.²³

One of the most prolific textbook houses was Ernst Klett Verlag. Klett Verlag published its middle school textbook *Kletts geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für die Mittelklassen* over almost the entire course of West Germany's existence. The first edition of *Kletts* Form A appeared in 1951 and was revised and republished until 1959. Form B of the same text appeared between 1956 and 1967 and was succeeded by Form C (1968-1983). All of these editions presented a center-right narrative, with emphasis on religious themes and the Church.²⁴ Due to this textbook's longevity, I selected it as the basis for my West German case study. Having concluded this overview of the textbook production process, let us turn to the East German case.

²² Ibid., 6-7.

²³ von Borries, 46.

²⁴ One of the text's authors, Fritz Textor was a member of the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP). Harmut Breyer, "Dr. Fritz Textor war vehementer Gegner der Entnazifizierung," *Westdeutsche allgemeine Zeitung* 2014, <http://www.derwesten.de/staedte/ennepetal/dr-fritz-textor-war-vehementer-gegner-der-entnazifizierung-id9119799.html>.

EAST GERMANY: THE SOCIALIST LENS

Historians have generally agreed that official East German memory and educational representations of the past remained relatively static over the course of the state's existence.²⁵ East German textbooks described the past, identified what went wrong in Weimar and Third Reich Germany, and prescribed remedies for the future. Using a socialist lens, East German schoolbooks described Nazism in the context of the class struggle as aggressive imperialist capitalism, which violently persecuted the working class. A 1952 East German textbook stated that "all of the laws of the Hitler State served the imperialists and increased the enslavement of the workers."²⁶ Workers and communists were portrayed as the primary victims and opponents of the Third Reich; these resisters were enshrined as the founding fathers of East Germany and were held up for emulation in the way forward. Nazi racism and antisemitism were external and subordinated to the political narrative. The victims, perpetrators, and resisters depicted in the textbooks reflected this understanding of history. That said, it would be overly simplistic to argue that there were no changes at all to this cast of characters over time; if examined closely enough, some telling "micro-changes" to the standard East German narrative can be characterized. This section will first lay out the basic East German narrative and then will turn to these "micro-changes."

²⁵ Meseth, 17. von Borries, 46.

²⁶ All textbook translations, unless otherwise noted, are that of the author. Paul Wandel, *Lehrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht, 8. Schuljahr* (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1952), 227.

*A “Tailored Truth”*²⁷

East German textbook narratives were explicit about Nazi-era crimes from the very beginning. To justify the postwar state, East Germany attempted to defame the previously powerful, particularly German capitalists.²⁸ This was often accomplished by making their involvement in Nazi-era war crimes abundantly clear. The 1952 textbook was direct in presenting the crimes of the Nazi elite, describing the slave labor, gassings and mass shootings inflicted upon both the Jewish and non-Jewish civilian populations of the East. The concentration camp system was also depicted, complete with photographs of a crematorium and also of a concentration camp stone quarry.²⁹ The text asserted that over 11 million were killed in the 300 Nazi concentration camps. Among those implicated in these crimes were the *Wehrmacht*, the SS, the SD, and large capitalist corporations including Krupp and IG-Farben.³⁰ The East German textbooks did not shy away from depicting wartime atrocities; indeed, they openly discussed Nazi crimes because they fit in well with the socialist interpretation of the Nazis as the ultimate capitalist evil.

East German textbooks were also careful to point out the continuities between these Nazi imperialists and contemporary West Germany.³¹ For example, when discussing the fate of communist resister Anton Saefkow, the 1960 *Lehrbuch für Geschichte der 10. Klasse* wrote, “The murderers of Anton Saefkow and companions live. They live in security and well-being,

²⁷ This term was borrowed from Olsen.

²⁸ Ibid., 8.

²⁹ The Stairs of Death at Mauthausen, although the text does not identify it as such. Wandel, 268-69.

³⁰ Ibid., 265, 67, 68, 69.

³¹ von Borries, 49.

residing in office and in dignity. Many of them wear judge's robes in West Germany today, regardless of their criminal activities."³² By pointing out that the culpable held positions of power in the West German state, East Germany externalized blame for Nazi atrocities and delegitimized its capitalist neighbor. This narrative loomed large in East Germany, not just in the textbooks. At the September 1958 dedication of the Buchenwald memorial, Minister President Otto Grotewohl said:

Today there are two German states in the world. One has learned from the lessons of history. It has found good and righteous lessons. It is the GDR [East Germany], a state of freedom and socialism. The West German state, is, however, a depository of reaction, in which militarists and fascists have managed to regain power and whose aggressive character is demonstrated by their reactionary acts.³³

West Germany was portrayed as reactionary and in thrall to the Nazi past. East Germany, in contrast, had learned from the mistakes of the past and had built a new free state.

East German textbooks, from the beginning, discussed Nazi persecution of Eastern European civilians. However, the schoolbooks tended to bundle Jews in with the rest of the Nazis' victims. Due to socialist ideology, the different victims of these crimes were indistinct and conflated, perpetuating a non-racial understanding of the Third Reich. For example, the 1960 *Lehrbuch für Gesichte der 10. Klasse* presented a picture of Jewish individuals, clearly bearing stars of David on their clothing, lined up, seemingly, for deportation. Yet, the caption under this picture read, "German fascists deported thousands of Poles to Germany and enslaved them to work in German armament factories."³⁴ Thus, the victims' identities as Jews were glossed over

³² Stefan Doernberg, Herbert Rüting, and Walter Schöler, *Geschichte 10: Lehrbuch für Geschichte der 10. Klasse der Oberschule* (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1960), 66.

³³ As quoted in Olsen, 68-69.

³⁴ East German textbooks usually never referred to "Nazis" or "National Socialism", in order to avoid confusion with actual "socialism." They used the terms "German fascism" or "Hitler's fascism" instead. This strategy also distanced the "fascists" from the German people. Doernberg, Rüting, and Schöler, 11. von Borries, 49. Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys*, *Mazal Holocaust Collection* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 14.

and Nazi terror towards non-Jewish Eastern European peoples was emphasized. The 1952 Grade 8 history textbook characterized the Nazis “racial hate” of the non-Jewish Slavic and Soviet peoples as “even more savage” than the persecution visited upon the Jews.³⁵ This was very much in line with East German state-sponsored memory culture and national political needs. Such an approach was not unusual for the time period. Until the 1960s, neither Western nor Eastern historical scholarship made much of a distinction made between racial and political victims of the Nazis.³⁶ However, the privileging of political victims over racial ones and this “nationalizing” of Holocaust victims in Second World War collective memory continued in Eastern Europe well past the 1960s, in contrast to in the West, in part, because of the convenience to the socialist lens.³⁷

Thus, the East Germans needed to promote figures that would displace responsibility and to justify the existence of East Germany.³⁸ The textbooks thus turned to the communist resistance. The resistance movement in Germany was described as widespread, with participants coming from all parts of society; however, the textbook asserted that the German working-class and communists made up the largest proportion of these anti-fascists. “This,” the 1952 textbook

³⁵ Wandel, 233. Konrad Hugo Jarausch, *After Hitler: Recivilizing Germans, 1945-1995*, trans. Brandon Hunziker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 133.

³⁶ David Cesarani, *After Eichmann: Collective Memory and the Holocaust since 1961* (London: Routledge, 2005), 20.

³⁷ Konstanty Gebert, “The Dialectics of Memory in Poland: Holocaust Memorials in Warsaw,” in *The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History*, ed. James Edward Young, Mazal Holocaust Collection (New York: Prestel, 1994); Svi Gitleman, “The Soviet Politics of the Holocaust,” in *The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History*, ed. James Edward Young, Mazal Holocaust Collection (New York: Prestel, 1994); Muriel Blaive, “The Memory of the Holocaust and of Communist Repression in a Comparative Perspective: The Cases of Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic,” in *Clashes in European Memory: The Case of Communist Repression and the Holocaust*, ed. Muriel Blaive, Christian Gerbel, and Thomas Lindenberger, European History and Public Spheres (Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2011).

³⁸ Olsen, 8.

commented, “is no accident; because the dictatorship of monopoly capitalism was directed above all else against the working class.”³⁹ As historian Jon Berndt Olsen wrote, “The state needed the public to view the communists as the greatest victims so that their triumph (the creation of the GDR) would be even more heroic.”⁴⁰ By emphasizing the communists’ victimhood and opposition to the Nazis, East German textbooks created a heroic “other Germany,” of which the postwar East German state was the heir.⁴¹

East German school texts published throughout the states’ existence asserted that these resistance fighters, particularly the National Committee for a Free Germany (NKFD), were the predecessors of the East German state. The NKFD—a group of antifascist workers, clergy, labor leaders, soldiers, and political party heads⁴² formed in Moscow during the war –was described by the 1970 *Geschichte, Lehrbuch für Klasse 9* as laying “a cornerstone for working together of various parts of the German people after the liberation from Hitler’ fascism in the national front of a democratic Germany.”⁴³ The 1960 *Lehrbuch für Geschichte der 10. Klasse* drew an even more direct link between the NKFD and the future East German state, writing that “the National Committee showed the way to beat German imperialism and militarism and therefore to save the German people and the German nation. Its program contained thoughts that later found their

³⁹ Wandel, 279.

⁴⁰ Olsen, 69.

⁴¹ This concept of “the other Germany” of “the resistance” providing a mythical redemptive narrative is explored in: Wolfgram, 106-47.

⁴² Such as Walter Ulbricht, Wilhelm Pieck, and Wilhelm Florin

⁴³ Walter Nimtz et al., *Geschichte Lehrbuch für Klasse 9*, 2 ed. (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1970), 225; Wandel, 283.

realization in the German Democratic Republic.”⁴⁴ Thus, East Germany was portrayed as the fulfillment and the heir of this heroic “other Germany” of the wartime years.⁴⁵

Therefore, East German textbooks described their particular version of the past and identified the elements of society that had led Germany to destruction. East German texts, reflective of trends throughout the Communist bloc, portrayed capitalist imperialism as responsible for Hitler and his crimes. Nazism’s greatest opponents and victims were the communists, whose heroism and ideological convictions should be emulated by East German schoolchildren. Racial victims of the Nazis were external to this story. Yet, despite the remarkable consistency of this narrative, there were occasional “micro-changes,” which will be explored in the next section. East German textbooks, although offering a “tailored truth,” did not always offer a monolithic one.

The Resistance Struggle

One of the most interesting “micro-changes” in the East German narrative involved the inclusion of new resisters into the “antifascist resistance struggle.” This change can be seen particularly in the narrative’s treatment of the army officers who participated in the July 20, 1944 army *putsch* against Hitler. In summer 1944, German army officers, dismayed by the course of the war, attempted to assassinate Hitler. Colonel Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg planted a bomb in Hitler’s private bunker, the “Wolf’s Den.” The assassination failed; Hitler’s wounds

⁴⁴ Doernberg, Rüting, and Schöler, 64.

⁴⁵ This concept of “the other Germany” of “the resistance” providing a mythical redemptive narrative is explored in: Wolfram, 106-47.

were relatively superficial. The *putsch* was foiled and many of the conspirators were executed at German army headquarters.⁴⁶

Overall, East German textbooks harshly criticized the July 20th conspirators, characterizing them as treacherous monopoly capitalists who had “tried to separate themselves from Hitler in order to salvage German imperialism and militarism.” The schoolbooks accused them of not wanting peace and instead desiring to continue the war with the USSR.⁴⁷ The 1952 East German textbook cautioned that “the conspiracy of the generals should not however be equated with the resistance fight of the working class. The socialist resistance fighters directed a conscious class war against fascism, they fought for the peace and for the elimination of imperialism, while the Generals of the old imperial order wanted to maintain it.” While the 1952 text acknowledged that some of the conspirators really were “animated by the honest will to replace the fascist dictatorship with a democratic order,” it concluded that “it does not change anything.”⁴⁸

The longstanding East German interpretation of the July 20th *putsch* as a treacherous capitalist scheme was a deliberate attack on the legitimacy and nation-rebuilding narrative of the West German state. The 1970 *Lehrbuch für Klasse 9* wrote, “In West Germany, it is still frequently avowed that the conspiracy of July 20, 1944 was the only important resistance fight against the fascists. Reactionary West German politicians invoke the ideas of the July 20th conspirators and claim that the West German state has realized their legacy.” The 1970 East German textbook asserted that West Germany used the July 20th narrative to “historically justify

⁴⁶ Peter Hoffmann, *History of the German Resistance, 1933-1945* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996).

⁴⁷ Nimtz et al., 229-30; Wandel, 283.

⁴⁸ Wandel, 283.

the revanchist, Neo-Nazi promoting politics of the ruling West German circles” and that this marginalized “the heroic fight of the tens of thousands of German communists and antifascists against fascism.”⁴⁹ The East German textbook narrative juxtaposed the July 20th conspirators with the members of the NKFD. At one point in the 1970 East German textbook, students were asked to “compare the goals of the conspirators of July 20, 1944 with those of the NKFD and clarify which of these goals corresponded to the interests of the German people!”⁵⁰ Thus, the East German textbooks clearly recognized the vital role that the events of July 20th played in West German rehabilitation. Trouble arose because West Germany’s conception of the “other Germany” was contradictory to East Germany’s “other Germany,” and therefore the East German project, which required communists, not bourgeois army officers, to take center stage.⁵¹

However, over time, some of the July 20th conspirators received a slightly more sympathetic hearing—particularly the figure of Colonel Graf von Stauffenberg. While the 1952 textbook had acknowledged that some among the conspirators did really want democracy, Stauffenberg had not been cited as an example.⁵² However, when new research emerged in the late 1950s showing that Stauffenberg had had links to the communist and socialist resistance, Stauffenberg began to be viewed in a more positive light.⁵³ One can identify a change in the representation of Stauffenberg by the 1960 East German textbook revision. The *Geschichte* editions published in 1960 and 1970 characterized Stauffenberg as patriotic and desiring of peace

⁴⁹ Nimtz et al., 230.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Wolfgram, 121-22.

⁵² Wandel, 283.

⁵³ This was also observed in: Wolfgram, 110-11.

with *both* the Western Allies and the USSR.⁵⁴ The 1984 and 1988 editions of the text directly cited Stauffenberg's attempts to work with the KPD.⁵⁵ By 1988, it was not just Stauffenberg who was described as a patriot, but also several other July 20th conspirators, including Fritz Lindemann, Friedrich Olbricht, Helmuth Stieff, and Henning von Tresckow.⁵⁶

The rehabilitation of some of the army officers coincided with the remilitarization of the East German state. Around the same time that a heroic Stauffenberg was introduced into the narrative, the East German National People's Army was formed (1956). Compulsory service was introduced in 1962.⁵⁷ The National People's Army was not entirely popular amongst the East German populace.⁵⁸ Thus, the adoption of heroic military officers can be understood as an "invented tradition," a response to a new situation through allusion to older events.⁵⁹ The World War II-era heroes were meant to make the German military tradition, as a whole, more attractive.

While Stauffenberg, and few others, may have been rehabilitated, the conspiracy as a whole was not. Although the 1970 textbook had kind words for Stauffenberg, it made it very clear that "the chief cause of the failure of the July 20 conspirators was that they refused to draw

⁵⁴ Doernberg, Rüting, and Schöler, 57. Nimtz et al., 229.

⁵⁵ I consulted the second printing of the 1984 revision, which was published in 1985. Wolfgang Bleyer et al., *Geschichte, Lehrbuch für Klasse 9* (Berlin: Volk und Wissen Volkseigener Verlag, 1985; repr., 2), 170. I consulted the second printing of the 1988 revision, which was published in 1989. Wolfgang Bleyer et al., *Geschichte, Lehrbuch für Klasse 9* (Berlin: Volk und Wissen Volkseigener Verlag, 1989; repr., 2), 189.

⁵⁶ Bleyer et al., 189.

⁵⁷ Nina Leonhard, "The National People's Army as an Object of (Non) Remembrance: The Place of East Germany's Military Heritage in Unified Germany," *German Politics and Society* 26, no. 4 (Winter 2008): 150, 57, <http://libproxy.lib.unc.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/libproxy.lib.unc.edu/docview/206346081?accountid=14244>.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 157.

⁵⁹ I am referencing Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger's work. Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012; reprint, 20).

upon the people. They stood above all as hostile to the working class and to the KPD.”⁶⁰ This wording only softened in the 1980s texts. For example, in the 1988 edition, the harsh sentence seen in the 1970 edition disappeared and was replaced by instructions to students to “classify how the July 20, 1944 attempt fits into the antifascist resistance fight in Germany” Yet, some of the July 20th conspirators were still described as wishing to “sustain capitalism after the war’s end and to hinder the development of socialism.”⁶¹ The development of the East German narrative surrounding the July 20th plot shows clearly that East German textbook and memory narratives could shift to accommodate new information. However, this new information was filtered, as always, through East Germany’s socialist lens.

The Racial Victims

Another “micro-change” can be observed in the East German narrative’s representation of the number of Jews killed in the Holocaust. The historian Bodo von Borries has asserted that no East German history textbook printed before 1988 mentioned the number of Jewish victims of the Holocaust.⁶² Yet, more careful examination reveals a more complicated picture. Borries is correct that for some time this statistic was missing from the East German narrative, in an effort to create a non-racial understanding of the Third Reich. Nevertheless, although the 1952 East German middle school textbook clearly diminished the Nazis’ unique cruelty towards East European Jews, it *did* provide the number of 5 million Jewish victims. What is most interesting is

⁶⁰ Nimitz et al., 230.

⁶¹ Bleyer et al., 189-90.

⁶² von Borries, 47-49.

that this is something which contemporaneous Italian and West German textbooks failed to do.⁶³ The presence of this statistic in this 1952 East German schoolbook and its absence from subsequent texts also reflected the changing East German political context. In the early years, the East German state was not able to achieve the memory monopoly that it sought. This plurality was also present in the political arena in the early years; during the 1940s, several communist functionaries openly advocated paying reparations to Jews, admitting the plural identities of the Third Reich victims. However, by the early 1950s, more strict adherents to the Kremlin line took full control of East German memory culture and moved it away from such recognition.⁶⁴ This clamp-down can be seen in the statistic's disappearance in the 1960, 1965, and 1970 editions of the East German textbook.

However, the number reemerged in the 1984 edition. The 1984 edition presented the numbers of "270,000 people of Jewish background...forced to emigrate from Hitler's Germany. Of the remaining approximately 240,000, the Fascists killed the majority." Indeed, in general, the 1984 edition provided a much greater focus on the Jews as an individual victim group, presenting a timeline of the persecution of the Jews that bore the text: "1939 to 1945: The persecution of the Jews in Germany and in those countries occupied by fascist German imperialism, organized the SS heads Heinrich Himmler, Reinhard Heydrich, Adolf Eichmann, and others, led to the extermination of about six million Jews."⁶⁵ This trend was continued in the 1988 edition of

⁶³ Wandel, 233; Hermann Pinnow and Fritz Textor, *Geschichte der neuesten Zeit : Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zur Gegenwart*, 2 ed., vol. 4, 4 vols., *Geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für die Mittelleklassen [Ausgabe A]* (Offenburg; Stuttgart: Lehrmittel-Verlag G.M.B.H.; Ernst Klett Verlag, 1952). Raffaello Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 2 ed., vol. 3, *Civiltà europea: corso di storia per le scuole media superiori* (Palermo: G. B. Palumbo, 1953).

⁶⁴ Thomas C. Fox, *Stated Memory: East Germany and the Holocaust* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 1999), 10-14; Herf, 69-72.

⁶⁵ Bleyer et al., 133, 81.

Geschichte.⁶⁶ This could be attributed to Erich Honecker's attempts to rehabilitate East Germany's image in the 1980s and to gain United States recognition as a "Most Favored Nation" trading partner. These efforts led Honecker to make conciliatory gestures towards the East German Jewish population, including rebuilding the East Berlin New Synagogue, inviting a U.S. rabbi to take up a post in the state, creating a Jewish cultural center called the Centrum Judaicum, and commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of *Kristallnacht* with fanfare.⁶⁷ Furthermore, East Germany's competitive relationship with West Germany, as well as its status as a perpetrator country, put it on a slightly different footing than the other countries of the communist bloc, necessitating a slightly different memory culture—one that increasingly acknowledged Jewish victims in the 1980s.⁶⁸

However, this new prominence of the Jews did not mean that the East German socialist lens fell away. Even in the East German textbook published as late as 1989, the Second World War was still framed in the context of the class struggle. A new emphasis on the Nazis' racial victims did not necessarily mean a diminished focus on the Nazis' political ones.⁶⁹ The "micro-changes" that occurred were successfully filtered through the East German socialist lens.

⁶⁶ Bleyer et al., 168.

⁶⁷ Peter Monteath, "Holocaust Remembrance in the German Democratic Republic-- and Beyond," in *Bringing the Dark Past to Light: The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Europe*, ed. John-Paul Himka and Joanna Beata Michlic (Lincoln, US: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 236-47; Mike Dennis, "Between Torah and Sickle: Jews in East Germany, 1945-1990," in *State and Minorities in Communist East Germany*, ed. Mike Dennis and Norman LaPorte, Monographs in German History (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), 48-58.

⁶⁸ Monteath, in *Bringing the Dark Past to Light: The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Europe*, 223.

⁶⁹ Bleyer et al.

ITALY: THE PATRIOTIC LENS

If East German texts employed a socialist lens to examine the wartime past, Italian schoolbooks used a patriotic one. Like their East German counterparts, Italian history textbooks provided a description of the past, identified its failings, and offered ways forward for the future. Italy deflected questions about its own complicity by externalizing blame for the persecution of the Jews and by presenting the Italian partisan struggle as a national one against German invaders. By emphasizing narratives of victimization and resistance, these textbooks served the Italian rebuilding project. However, these narratives did not emerge immediately, and when they did, they were not always entirely consistent.

Avoidance

In fact, early postwar textbooks in Italy were reluctant to engage at all with recent history. Although under the oversight of the occupying Allied powers, Italy was not mandated to teach its students about the fascist past. Between 1944 and 1945, the Subcommittee for Education of the Allied Military Government (later the Allied Control Commission's Education Subcommittee) began the creation of new, less fascist school texts. These efforts did not reach all Italian school children. In the 1944/5 school year, a fourth of schoolchildren in "liberated" Italy used newly printed and revised versions of textbooks, while the other three quarters used redacted versions of the fascist *libri dello stato* (state textbooks). However, even the newly

published textbooks stopped at World War I and ignored the twenty years of Mussolini's government.⁷⁰

Perhaps influenced by the lack of Allied pressure, Italian recalcitrance about the recent past continued in the 1950s. The first edition of Raffaello Morghen's *Civiltà europea* (1951) devoted only two and a half pages to "Italy and the Twenty Years of Fascism" and essentially gave no details about the period of time.⁷¹ The second edition of the textbook, published in 1953, included more detail than the 1951 edition about the development of fascism and its structures. However, the text ended its narrative with the beginning of the Second World War and only addressed the events of 1938-1945 in a brief, dry chronology which confined itself largely to military movements and territorial annexations. The Second World War was clearly an afterthought that the textbook author, Morghen, would have prefer ignored.⁷²

Nor was such an approach frowned upon by Italian pedagogical guidelines. The 1960 "Plan of Study for Middle Schools," listed the First World War as the last topic of study for contemporary history.⁷³ It was not until the creation of the *scuola media statale* (state middle schools) in December 1962 and the publication of new programs of study in 1963 that teachers were instructed to teach students in Class III (the equivalent of the American Grade 8) Italian

⁷⁰On October 7, 1944, the United Nations News service reported that 4-5 million Italian children had begun school again in Allied-occupied Italy. For more on the role of the Allied Control Commission's Education Subcommission, see: White, 205-09; Ascenzi, 255.

⁷¹ Raffaello Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 1 ed., vol. 3, *Civiltà europea: corso di storia per le scuole media superiori* (Palermo: G. B. Palumbo, 1951), 290-92.

⁷² Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 343-65.

⁷³ *Piano di studi per la scuola media inferiore, edito nel 1944 dalla Sottocommissione Alleata All'Educazione Programmi di Educazione Civica, D.P.R. 13 Giugno 1958, N. 585, Programmi di educazione fisica, D.P.R. 25 Luglio 1952, N. 1226, esami di ammissione agli istituti medi inferiori, Programmi scolastici Pirola* (Milano: Pirola, 1960), 1, 8-9.

history “up until our times.”⁷⁴ The study of contemporary history was also largely ignored in Italian universities; the first chair of contemporary history was set up in 1961.⁷⁵

In this very sparse depiction of wartime crimes, Morghen’s textbook said very little as to who was responsible and was far more direct about who was not—the Italian people. Indeed, collaboration with the Italian fascist regime was represented, not as a failing, but as a sign of the Italian people’s persistence and innate goodness. Morghen wrote, “The great majority had continued to loyally serve the state and society and, for the work of its peasants, its workers, its officials, Italy had continued to live and to produce, despite fascism, revealing the vigor, the industriousness, the humanity of its people.”⁷⁶ Morghen presented Italians as *italiani, brava gente* [Italians, good people], who were fundamentally good. They had only accepted fascism, but had not actively or enthusiastically supported it.⁷⁷ Morghen also omitted mention of any persecution of the Jews by the Italian people, including the passage of the 1938 Italian racial laws.

Although the Italian people were presented as largely innocent of any of fascism’s crimes, the same understanding was not extended to the German people. Morghen portrayed the German people as very much in agreement with Hitler’s violent impulses and actions, conjuring

⁷⁴ Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *Scuola media statale orari e programmi di insegnamento: criteri orientativi e modalità per le prove d'esame di licenza* (Roma: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1965), 7, 31.

⁷⁵ Donald Sassoon, "Italy after Fascism: The Predicament of Dominant Narratives," in *Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe During the 1940s and 1950*, ed. Richard Bessel; Dirk Schumann, Publications of the German Historical Institute (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 2003), 266.

⁷⁶ Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 346.

⁷⁷ Claudio Fogu, "Italiani Brava Gente : The Legacy of Fascist Historical Culture on Italian Politics of Memory," in *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, ed. Richard Ted Lebow; Wulf Kansteiner; Claudio Fogu (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Sassoon, in *Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe During the 1940s and 1950*, 272-73.

up the image of *il cattivo tedesco* [the evil German].⁷⁸ Thus, in Morghen's 1953 textbook, the persecutors and the villains were quite simply, the indistinguishable mass of the German people. This choice could be attributed to Morghen's own ties to the wartime past.

Raffaello Morghen likely had fascist ties, since he been active in the academy during fascist rule. Morghen had served as the editor of the *Enciclopedia italiana* from 1931 to 1937, had held a post at the University of Palermo in 1940, and had taught modern history at the University of Perugia from 1941 to 1948.⁷⁹ It is true that Morghen may not have been high in the favor of the Fascist government, as at one point he lost out on a position in 1943 at the University of Rome due to the interference of Giovanni Gentile, but he must have signed an oath of allegiance "to the country and to the Fascist regime" since he was able to hold his university appointments during this time period.⁸⁰ Thus, there must have been a certain amount of self-justification present in Morghen's statement in 1953 *Civiltà europea* that from 1932 onward, "almost all citizens that participated in the life of the nation in any way were constrained, if they wanted to live, to apply for membership in the fascist party."⁸¹ Given his own acquiescence to the regime, it is unsurprising that Morghen, writing in the 1950s, wished to stress the innocence of the Italian people and to largely ignore the wartime years.

⁷⁸ Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 352. Filippo Focardi, *Il cattivo tedesco e il bravo italiano: la rimozione delle colpe della seconda guerra mondiale* (Bari: GLF editori Laterza, 2013).

⁷⁹ Roger Griffin described "prestigious projects such as the *Enciclopedia Italiana*" as "secur[ing] at least luke-warm collusion from many of the country's most gifted artists, academics, and scientists, thus causing their achievements to be equated with the success of Fascism." *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, s.v. "Morghen, Raffaello," [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/raffaello-morghen_res-e3145db8-9476-11e1-9b2f-d5ce3506d72e_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/raffaello-morghen_res-e3145db8-9476-11e1-9b2f-d5ce3506d72e_(Dizionario-Biografico)/); Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (London: Routledge, 1993), 72.

⁸⁰ Konrad Hugo Jarausch, *Out of Ashes: A New History of Europe in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 173; Martin Clark, *Modern Italy, 1871 to the Present* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2008), 294-95. *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*.

⁸¹ Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 346.

Since Raffaello Morghen in his 1951 and 1953 editions of *Civiltà europea* made the conscious choice to treat the years of 1939-1945 only in timeline form and to eschew narrative, the wartime years received only the barest of description and the identities of the victims of Nazism and fascism were quite obscure. Aside from the brief mention of German persecution of the Jews, there was no mention of the Holocaust. That said, while both 1950s editions of the textbook essentially ignored both the racial and political victims of Nazism and fascism, they did highlight the suffering of one particular group—the Italian partisan resistance to the Nazis, as well as the Italian civilian population from 1943 to 1945.

Morghen concluded his 1953 edition with a letter written by a young partisan named Giacomo Ulivi, taken from the book *Letters of Those Condemned to Death from the Italian Resistance*. In the textbook's introduction to this primary source, Morghen wrote of “thousands and thousands of Italians from all social classes and all conditions, peasants, workers, students, young women, mothers of families, priests, simple soldiers and superior officials [who] fell before execution squads or hit in combat or butchered in mass slaughters.”⁸² With these words, Morghen suggested two things: firstly that the Italian people had been the ultimate victims of the Second World War, and secondly that their participation in the resistance against the Nazi invaders during the RSI period (1943-1945) had been widespread.

The inclusion of the Ulivi letter accomplished a third goal, as well. In his letter, written before he was shot in 1944, Ulivi urged his fellow countrymen to participate in the national political life and suggested that fascism had been able to take hold because Italians had abdicated responsibility for political participation. He concluded with a call for constitutional

⁸² Ibid., 367.

government.⁸³ Ulivi's letter played on a narrative that used the resistance as a sort of legitimizing precursor to the postwar state. The resistance struggle was portrayed as a "Second Risorgimento" or a second struggle for the Italian state. This reflected the dominant Christian Democratic narrative of downplaying the revolutionary nature of partisan activity during the 1943-945 period, due to the Leftist sympathies of many of the partisans, in favor of celebrating the Italian armed forces and the Italian state.⁸⁴ Christian Democracy (CD), representing the Italian political Center-Right, had latitude to do so, given that it had "ditched" the Left in 1947 and basically dominated the Italian political scene from that point until the end of the First Republic.⁸⁵

That said, this CD narrative did not go without response from the Left. Some members of the postwar Communist Party of Italy (PCI), including PCI leader Palmiro Togliatto, were willing to accept a narrative in service to the Italian state, but insisted that their participation in the antifascist struggle be recognized. They promoted a patriotic *resistenza tricolore* narrative, which stripped the resistance of its Marxist undertones, because it delegitimized anticommunism, placed antifascism as the bedrock of the postwar Italian Republic, and allowed for the PCI's entry into postwar coalition government.⁸⁶ As historian Claudio Fogu described, "In the new version of the story...one could underline the contribution of Christian Democrats and others as the erstwhile partners of the Communists in the Resistance and in the short-lived postwar governments of national unity." Other communists, however, were unwilling to accept this and

⁸³ Ibid., 367-70.

⁸⁴ Fogu, in *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, 152-53.

⁸⁵ The term "ditching the Left" is that of Ginsborg. Paul Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics, 1943-1988* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 110-12. Christopher Duggan, *The Force of Destiny: A History of Italy since 1796* (London; New York: Allen Lane, 2007), 542.

⁸⁶ The term *resistenza tricolore* refers to the tricolor of the Italian flag. This term is borrowed from: Filippo Focardi, *La guerra della memoria: la resistenza nel dibattito politico italiano dal 1945 a oggi* (Roma: Laterza, 2005) as cited in: Clifford, 82.

emphasized the communist character of the heroic resistance, in what has been termed the *resistenza rossa* narrative.⁸⁷ That said, all three of these contested storylines—the CD narrative, the Leftist *resistenza tricolore*, and the Leftist *resistenza rossa* narrative—served to rehabilitate the Italian people. Like in Poland and in France, the resistance served as a sort of redemptive narrative for the Italian nation.⁸⁸ Thus, various formulations of the “other Italy” redeemed and served as a foundation upon which to build the present one.

Although in the 1950s, the *Civiltà europea* texts featured far less discussion of the recent past than the West German *Klett* series or the East German *Lehrbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht* did, the Italian textbooks could not completely ignore the years of fascism. Thus, they pointed towards the “German other”—*il cattivo tedesco*— and placed the blame upon him. Italian schoolbooks stressed the innocence of the Italian people and the suffering of Italian civilians far above the racial and political victims of the Nazis. Above all, they trumpeted the Italian resistance.

The War of Liberation

By the 1960s, Italy could no longer completely avoid teaching about the Second World War and Italy’s involvement with the Axis power. It could, however, craft a narrative that stressed Italian resistance to fascist government (1923-1943) and later to German occupiers (1943-1945). By painting a picture of a broad national antifascist coalition, which reflected the

⁸⁷ Sassoon, in *Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe During the 1940s and 1950*, 268-69. Focardi, *La guerra della memoria : la resistenza nel dibattito politico italiano dal 1945 a oggi*, 41-55 as cited in: Clifford, 82.

⁸⁸ For a discussion of Poland, see: Gebert, in *The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History*. For a discussion of France, see: Clifford.

political Left's entry into Italian government, the Italian textbook narrative externalized blame and legitimized the postwar republic as an heir to this wartime resistance. This precluded any real self-examination about Italian complicity in wartime crimes or any sustained focus on the Nazis' racial victims.

Antifascist resistance was portrayed as a longstanding feature of Italian society.

According to the 1963 edition of *Civiltà europea*, there was opposition to Mussolini from the beginning:

Since the first victory of fascism in 1922, a determined movement of *resistance* against the new regime took shape, that manifested itself, during the **ventennio**⁸⁹, in the *democratic opposition* carried out on the side by parliamentarians and men of all parties; in the organization of an *antifascist movement* abroad, or the work of Italians escaping fascist persecution by exile⁹⁰.

The textbook stressed that “men of all parties” participated in the antifascist opposition, painting it as a “national” movement. This antifascist resistance during the *ventennio* was portrayed as the parent of the Italian partisan struggle during the RSI. Just as *Civiltà europea* stressed the plurality of the antifascist movement during the *ventennio*, it also emphasized the political diversity of the members of the Italian resistance. The textbook listed the various partisan bands and made careful note of which political parties they represented: the Communist Party, the Action Party, the Socialist Party, the Liberals and the Democratic Christians.⁹¹ A veritable national front was presented on the pages of the text, representing the idea of a patriotic *resistenza tricolore*.

⁸⁹ The twenty years of the fascist Kingdom of Italian (1923-1943). The *ventennio* was followed by the *biennio* of the Italian Social Republic (1943-1945), during which Italian partisans (many of whom were Communists), fought against the forces of the RSI and of Nazi Germany.

⁹⁰ Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 378.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 383.

This increased acknowledgement of Leftist involvement in the resistance could be attributed to the political shift that Italy experienced during the 1960s. In 1960, discredited by the support of monarchists and neofascists and after the police, on his orders, opened fire on demonstrators in Genoa, Catania, and Palermo, CD politician Ferdinando Tambroni was forced to step down as prime minister. A center-left coalition came to power, supported by left-wing CD parliamentarians and the Italian Socialist Party (PSI), in what has been termed the “opening to the left.”⁹² However, while this move to the Left prompted a greater recognition of the partisan resistance and its Leftist participations, it promoted little critical self-reflection about Italian culpability, as seen in *Civiltà europea*. Thus, Italian culture and textbooks continued to espouse a resistance narrative that eliminated all possibility of Italian culpability well into the 1980s.⁹³

Indeed, perhaps in deference to the CD members that remained in the ruling coalition, even the Italian army was incorporated into this patriotic *resistenza tricolore*. Italian troops who resisted German forces after the September 8, 1943 armistice were lauded. The 1963 textbook stated that “at the doors of Rome, in Corsica, in Yugoslavia, in Cefalonia, in Egypt, the heroic resistance of divisions and isolated distributions...saved honor.”⁹⁴ The textbook also highlighted the Italian soldiers who fought on the side of the Allies from 1943-1945.⁹⁵ Yet, it was mum on the subject of Italian soldiers who fought with the German army during the RSI.⁹⁶

⁹²Fogu, in *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, 153-54. Ginsborg, 254-57.

⁹³ Sierp, 55-57.

⁹⁴ Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 377.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 378, 81.

⁹⁶ After the armistice, Italian troops were left with the choice either to surrender to the Germans or to continue to fight on the side of the Axis. Some Italian troops (particularly those stationed on the peninsula) were given the chance to “go home” after surrendering. Others (particularly those outside the peninsula) were taken prisoner by the Germans. Faced with these possibilities, some Italian soldiers surrendered, some resisted German, refusing to surrender their arms and taking to the mountains as partisans, and some chose to continue to fight on the German side. The result was essentially the disintegration of the Royal Italian Army. Elena Agarossi, *A Nation Collapses*:

Despite a vague allusion to the fact that “the war for liberation of the homeland” was “a civil war,” it was basically unclear in the textbook that there were Italians fighting on both sides for the last two years of the Second World War.⁹⁷ Although more recent historians have shown that Italian police forces of the RSI rounded up their Jewish countrymen and turned them over to the Nazis, the textbook held “the Germans” responsible for the arrest and deportation of the Italian Jews.⁹⁸ This neglect of RSI police’s involvement was also reflected in contemporary historiography, such as Renzo De Felice’s 1961 *The Jews in Fascist Italy*.⁹⁹ The “military formation of the *Republic of Salò* [RSI]” was mentioned, but again it was unclear who or what these military formations might have been. This was because an admission that the RSI had existed with significant Italian support would have interfered with the nationalist representation of the Italian resistance struggle as a “Second Risorgimento” or a “war of liberation.”¹⁰⁰

Like the 1953 edition, the 1963 textbook stressed the connection between the partisan struggle and the formation of the postwar Italian republic. Ullivi’s letter with its call for constitutional government, first seen in the 1953 edition, was faithfully reprinted in the 1963 version.¹⁰¹ Morghen made the linkage even clearer when he characterized the new constitution of

The Italian Surrender of September 1943, trans. Harvey Fergusson II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 91-124.

⁹⁷ The concept of the years 1943-1945 as a true “civil war” only gained real traction after the publication of: Claudio Pavone, *Una guerra civile: saggio storico sulla moralità nella resistenza*, *Nuova cultura* (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 1991). An English translation appeared in 2013: Claudio Pavone, *A Civil War: A History of the Italian Resistance*, trans. Peter Levy (2013). For more on the historiographical change, see: Agarossi, 135.

⁹⁸ Sarfatti, 107-202.

⁹⁹ De Felice.

¹⁰⁰ Federico Ciavattone, ‘A Civil War’. *The Italian Civil War Experience During Wwii and the Memory of the ‘Vanquished’* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: 2016).

¹⁰¹ Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 391-94.

the Republic of Italy as “the final crowning achievement of ample years of fighting and heroic sacrifice; it cost blood and unprecedented suffering and dead in the fight and was a sacred inheritance to the survivors.”¹⁰² Indeed, at one point in the textbook, Morghen suggested that the Italian Resistance had “a particular value” as compared to resistance movements in other European countries because it had gave birth to a postwar republic.¹⁰³ Thus, although new participants in the resistance struggle were acknowledged, an altogether very similar narrative was maintained through the 1960s in the *Civiltà europea* textbook.

Memory Inertia

The *Civiltà europea* textbook narrative underwent few substantial changes between the 1963 and the 1989 edition. Visually, the textbook changed. Larger and more frequent pictures with captions were added. The text was reformatted for the ease of the student reader. But, despite some reworking of sentences, the narrative of national resistance against a foreign German foe stayed largely the same. The Italian people were presented as participating in widespread resistance and revolt against the Nazi-fascists and RSI still seemed a shadowy undeveloped concept. However, the 1989 edition was marked by a slightly increased focus on the Nazis’ racial victims, similar to East Germany.

The resistance narrative was alive and well in the 1989 *Civiltà europea*, though the sheer number of pages devoted to it was slightly reduced. Although Ullivi’s letter was also missing, some passages similar to those seen in the 1963 edition about the partisan bands of many

¹⁰² Ibid., 388.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 378.

political orientations were repeated in the 1989 version.¹⁰⁴ The 1989 edition also added a very long description of the people's insurrection of April 25, 1945, further contributing to the idea that Mussolini and followers stood alone and were violently opposed by most Italians.¹⁰⁵

Perhaps the passage that best epitomizes what changed and what stayed the same between the 1963 and 1989 *Civiltà europea* was the paragraph, previously discussed, that evaluated the "war for liberation." In the 1963 edition, the paragraph stated:

The war for liberation of the homeland took the form for the Italians of a civil war. The Germans plundered completely, deported men to work camps in Germany en masse, *mercilessly hunted down the Jews*, who were transferred to Germany and sent to *death camps*, where Himmler scientifically organized the systematic destruction of about six million individuals collected from all the states in Europe.

Allied with the Nazis were the military formations of the *Republic of Salò*, against whom the war of the partisans was fought also to institute a new social and political order.¹⁰⁶

Twenty-six years later, it read largely the same:

The war for the liberation of the homeland had for the Italians the character of a *war fought against a foreigner* and also that of a *civil war*. The Germans plundered greatly and engaged in a *merciless hunt for the Jews*, who were transferred into Germany and sent on their way to *annihilation camps*. HIMMLER, the creator of the SS and head of all the police corps in the Reich, scientifically organized the *systematic destruction* of about 6.000.000 individuals, collected from all the states in Europe. The military formations of the Social Republic of Salò, against whom the partisans' war was fought, also to institute a new social and political order, allied with the Nazis.¹⁰⁷

Again, in the 1989 edition, there was the same suggestion that the "war for liberation" in Italy from 1943-1945 could be considered a "civil war" without any discussion of who was on the opposing side. Again, German soldiers were held entirely responsible for rounding up and deporting of Italian Jews.

¹⁰⁴ Raffaello Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 1 ed., vol. 3, *Civiltà europea: corso di storia per le scuole media superiori* (Palermo: G. B. Palumbo, 1989), 395.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 400-01.

¹⁰⁶ Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 378.

¹⁰⁷ Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 391-92.

However, the 1989 paragraph did feature new details about the extermination of the Jews of Europe. The 1989 edition also featured a picture of the crematorium at a death camp with the caption:

The Germans undertook the systematic suppression of the Jews, who were shut in many camps of extermination disseminated throughout all Germany. The Jews were generally killed in specific gas chambers and their bodies vanished through burning in ovens. These are those of the camp of Auschwitz II near Birkenau, a small town in Poland, in which three million people were cremated, mostly Jews.¹⁰⁸

What is most interesting about this caption (other than the fact that it incorrectly stated that all the death camps were in Germany, when in fact none were), is its omission of the fact that a number of Italian Jews were deported to Auschwitz and that the RSI police had participated in this deportation.¹⁰⁹ Italian complicity continued to be omitted, not just in this case, but throughout the book. Indeed, the textbook also neglected to mention the Italian antisemitic racial laws passed in 1938, although the German Nuremberg race laws were mentioned¹¹⁰

This begs the question of why the *Civiltà europea* narrative was able to stay so relatively stagnant. The answer seems to be that there were few push factors, even in 1980s Italian society. The Ministry for Education seems to have provided the textbooks with little guidance as to how to deal with the recent past. A 1985 program of study simply stated that in Grade 8, the following should be covered: “From 1815 to our days with essential references to Europe, the world, decolonization. It will have particular regard to Italy in the last fifty years, in the painting of

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 392.

¹⁰⁹ The historian Liliana Picciotto Fargion has estimated that approximately 7,000-8,000 Italian Jews were either deported or killed in Italy. Of those deported, 91 percent were sent to Auschwitz. 94 percent of those were killed there. Sarfatti, 178-211. Liliana Picciotto Fargion, *Il libro della memoria: gli ebrei deportati dall'Italia (1943-1945)*, 2 ed. (Milano: Gruppo Ugo Mursia Editore, S p A, 1991).

¹¹⁰ Morghen, *Civiltà europea: età contemporanea*, 379-80.

world history.”¹¹¹ Nor was there a particular push coming from the political parties. Lastly, there was little impetus coming from the academy. Dominant during these years was De Felice, whose *The Jews in Fascist Italy* has continued to be published and reprinted up until 2015. De Felice wrote in his text of a “wave of solidarity, which was truly national and saw the overwhelming majority of Italians helping their Jewish compatriots and anyone else seeking refuge from Nazi barbarism in Italy, every way they could” during the RSI period.¹¹² This reflected historiography on this issue more broadly. However, it must be noted that Morghen’s textbook lagged even further behind the low standard of self-criticism set by De Felice’s work. De Felice may have portrayed Italians as rescuers during the RSI period, but even he, as early as 1961, at least admitted that the 1938 Italian racial laws had existed.¹¹³ The 1961 Eichmann trial, 1963-1965 Auschwitz trials, the 1979 broadcast of the miniseries *Holocaust*, the 1985 broadcast of Claude Lanzmann’s *Shoah* and the 1986-8 Historian’s Debate in West Germany had brought the Nazis’ racial victims more to the fore, but there was little emerging in Italian or even transnational European culture that disrupted or could not be interpreted through Italy’s patriotic lens of the Second World War.¹¹⁴ Thus, a sort of memory inertia was maintained.

¹¹¹ *Scuola media Ssatale, Programmi scolastici Pirola* (Milano: Pirola Editore, 1985), 34.

¹¹² De Felice, *The Jews in Fascist Italy*, 478.

¹¹³ That said, De Felice portrayed the passage of the racial laws as alienating to most Italians. De Felice was also the author of a giant biography of Mussolini and of *Intervista sul fascismo*. For more on Renzo De Felice and his work, please see: Clifford, 103-04; Sassoon, in *Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe During the 1940s and 1950*, 264-65. Renzo De Felice, *Storia degli ebrei sotto il fascismo, Biblioteca di cultura storica* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi editore S.p.A, 1961), 398-432.

¹¹⁴ Amos Goldberg and Heinz Habedank, "Preface," in *Marking Evil: Holocaust Memory in the Global Age*, ed. Haim Hazan and Amos Goldberg, Making Sense of History (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015), xi. Wulf Kansteiner, *In Pursuit of German Memory: History, Television, and Politics after Auschwitz* (Athens, US: Ohio University Press, 2006), 54-85.

WEST GERMANY: THE MALLEABLE LENS

West German textbooks also offered a narrative of the past that identified those responsible for the Third Reich and rehabilitated institutions important to West Germany's future. However, West German textbooks faced the hardest task. Unable to blame an external "other" for the Holocaust as East Germany and Italy had done, West German textbooks struggled with the culpable "other" within. During this struggle, West German texts employed a variety of mechanisms to displace blame. West German texts tried to separate "Nazis" from the German people, arguing that ordinary citizens could not be held responsible for wartime atrocities. In fact, ordinary Germans were also victims of the war. A bourgeois resistance narrative also emerged in West German schoolbooks that attempted to show traditional institutions as free of culpability for the Third Reich and therefore admissible into postwar society.¹¹⁵

Selective Silence

One obvious strategy utilized in 1950s' West German textbooks' struggle with the "internal other" was an overemphasis on German civilians and soldiers' wartime suffering and an underemphasis on the Nazi racial victims. The 1959 *Klett's* Form B edition lamented the misery that could have been avoided if the war had ended in 1944: "Half [Germany's] dead soldiers and half the hostile bombs fallen on it, not to mention the other suffering and destruction

¹¹⁵ Konrad Hugo Jarausch and Michael Geyer, *Shattered Past: Reconstructing German Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 10.

across almost all of Germany.”¹¹⁶ Notably, the text focused on how German soldiers’ and civilians’ suffering could have been averted; it neglected to consider victims of the Nazis that could have been spared. In contrast to this distinct focus on German civilians, the *Klett*s books of the 1950s spent less time discussing the Nazis’ racial victims. When they did, they refrained from reporting any actual statistics as to how many Jews were killed by the Nazis—instead employing generalizations like “many million” or “several million.”¹¹⁷ This focus on German civilian suffering and the underemphasis on the Nazis’ racial victims could be attributed to the fact that Hitler had been more or less successfully destroyed the German-Jewish community.¹¹⁸ In the postwar period, the lack of German Jewish voices and the abundance of non-Jewish German ones led to a sort of “victim soup.”¹¹⁹

West German textbooks also struggled with who the perpetrators of the Holocaust were and with how much the ordinary German had known about Jewish persecution and extermination. Initially, the *Klett*s textbooks asserted that almost no one had had knowledge of the extermination of the Jews. The 1951 Form A text cited an American judge at the Nuremberg trials saying that “the testimonies of those who were involved in the awful systemic mass extermination, show with great plausibility that no more than a hundred persons in total were

¹¹⁶ Hermann Pinnow and Fritz Textor, *Um Volksstaat und Völkergemeinschaft*, [4] ed., vol. 4, 4 vols., *Klett's geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für die Mittelklassen, Ausgabe B* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1959), 193. von Borries, 50-51.

¹¹⁷ Hermann Pinnow and Fritz Textor, *Um Volksstaat und Völkergemeinschaft*, 1 ed., vol. 4, *Klett's geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für die Mittelklassen, Ausgabe B* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1956), 201. Hermann Pinnow and Fritz Textor, *Geschichte der neuesten Zeit: Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zur Gegenwart*, 1 ed., vol. 4, 4 vols., *Geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für die Mittelklassen [Ausgabe A]* (Offenburg; Stuttgart: Lehrmittel-Verlag G.M.B.H.; Ernst Klett Verlag, 1951), 173.

¹¹⁸ In the immediate postwar, only 30,000 Jews remained in Germany. Dennis, in *State and Minorities in Communist East Germany*, 28.

¹¹⁹ I borrowed the term “victim soup” from Harold Marcuse. Marcuse, 122.

aware of the thing at all.”¹²⁰ The Nuremberg judge quote was reprinted in all the *Kletts* Form A texts through 1956 and also in the 1956 Form B text. It disappeared by the 1959 Form A and the 1957 Form B editions and was replaced with slightly more ambivalent wording that admitted that some Germans might have known about the Holocaust. Stressing the difference between suspicion and actual knowledge, the textbook still maintained that “only very few know about it.” Yet, it conceded, there were “very many” who “guess that fearful things are taking place, but no one has evidence, no one dares to raise his voice: death to him would be sure, and his death would have accomplished not even the smallest thing.”¹²¹ Thus, the textbook broached the idea that there different levels of awareness of the Holocaust. Some may have heard rumors, unconfirmed due to strong Nazi state censorship. Some certainly had suspected, but had looked away so that their suspicions were not confirmed. Others had had first-hand knowledge. The textbook thus simultaneously enlarged the circle of those admitted to have been aware of the mass murder that had occurred and explained away their inaction.

This depiction is not unexpected, given the political situation in West Germany in the 1950s. Throughout the first decade and a half of its life, West Germany was dominated by Konrad Adenauer’s Christian Democratic Union (CDU), a center-right party that drew its support from more religious voters and which embraced the integration of West Germany into the Western sphere of influence as a means to prevent a right-wing Nazi revival. However, for Adenauer, integration required less memory regarding past crimes. Both the CDU and their political opponents, the leftist Social Democratic Party (SPD) feared that too heavy a support for

¹²⁰ I am unable to substantiate this quote from the Nuremberg judge. Pinnow and Textor, *Geschichte der neuesten Zeit: Von der Mitte Des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zur Gegenwart*, 173.

¹²¹ Hermann Pinnow and Fritz Textor, *Um Volksstaat und Völkergemeinschaft*, 2 ed., vol. 4, *Kletts geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für die Mittelklassen, Ausgabe B* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1957), 192.

war crimes trial would lead to a loss in votes. As historian Norbert Frei wrote, “All the democratic parties knew they had to win their votes from a populace that, in free and fair elections, would have chosen Hitler by an overwhelming majority a mere decade earlier.”¹²² That said, as the CDU constituency was far more likely to be tainted by the Nazi past than that of the SPD, the center-right party was ever more reticent to support attributing blame.¹²³

Discomfort about ordinary Germans’ responsibility could also be assuaged with a hearty resistance narrative.¹²⁴ The West German resistance narrative particularly focused on two bourgeois institutions: the army and the Church. Much discussion of the army centered around the July 20th army officers’ *putsch*. Although ineffectual in its lifetime, the July 20th *putsch* carried great resonance in postwar West German society. The *putsch* leapt to prominence in West German textbooks in the mid-1950s.¹²⁵ Although mentioned from the very first edition (1951) of the *Klett*s textbook, the July 20th plot increased in narrative emphasis around 1956. While the 1954 edition of *Klett*s Form A presented only three paragraphs on the topic, the 1956 edition of Form B presented four.¹²⁶ The timing of this increase was no accident. Like East Germany, West Germany rearmed in the 1950s. Upon joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1955, the previously civilian West Germany formed the *Bundeswehr*. Much of the leadership of the new *Bundeswehr* had come from former members of the Nazi-era

¹²² Norbert Frei, *Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration*, trans. Joel Golb (New York, NY, USA: Columbia University Press, 2002), 307, 10.

¹²³ Herf, 267-68. Sierp, 35-38.

¹²⁴ Although Falk Pingel argues that during this time “there was no mention of resistance to National Socialism” by teachers. Pingel, in *What Shall We Tell the Children?: International Perspectives on School History Textbooks*, 136.

¹²⁵ Wolfgram, 118-20.

¹²⁶ Hermann Pinnow and Fritz Textor, *Geschichte der neuesten Zeit: Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zur Gegenwart* 4ed., vol. 4a, *Geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für die Mittelklassen [Ausgabe A]* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1954), 176; Pinnow and Textor, *Um Volksstaat und Völkergemeinschaft*, 193.

Wehrmacht and Weimar-era *Reichswehr*.¹²⁷ Due to their involvement in Nazi-era war-crimes, the former German military members and their traditions were somewhat tarnished. The July 20th *putsch* offered a new alternate source of military tradition (and furthermore, one that was acceptable to the Allies), rehabilitating the image of the German army in light of political needs.

The textbook accomplished this rehabilitation by trying to get the student reader to sympathize with the officers. Before the mid-1950s, many perceived the July 20th conspirators as traitorous for having betrayed their military oaths.¹²⁸ Knowing that the “treason” accusation was preventing the effective use of the July 20th plot in West German national narrative, the *Klett*s textbooks (beginning with the 1956 edition of Form B) began to place the reader in the midst of the conspirators’ internal dilemma:

May one—in the middle of a war— risk a revolution, thus making oneself guilty of high treason and putting Germany in danger of a civil war? May one—in the face of a demand for unconditional surrender—strike a deal with hostile foreign countries, thus committing “treason”? Ought one turn to the Western powers or even to the Soviet Union? May one, or rather, must one—as a public official and officer—break an oath and kill a criminal tyrant?

The July 20th conspirators were recast as heroic patriots. The same text spoke of their “love of country” and “ethical magnitude.”¹²⁹ Beginning in the 1956 edition of Form B and continuing through the 1983 edition for Form C, they were described as an “other Germany.” This “other Germany” was not composed of German émigrés who fled the Nazis, but Germans who stayed and resisted the regime from the inside. Essentially, the textbooks reconstructed events of the

¹²⁷. Jens O. Koltermann, "Citizen in Uniform: Democratic Germany and the Changing Bundeswehr," *Parameters* 42, no. 2 (Summer 2012 2012): 109, 11, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1238653359?accountid=14244>

¹²⁸ Herf, 326-29.

¹²⁹ Pinnow and Textor, *Um Volksstaat und Völkergemeinschaft*, 193.

past in light of needs of the present.¹³⁰ Like in East Germany, an “invented tradition” was born.¹³¹

Another featured character in the West Germany’s “other Germany” was the Church. The *Kletts* texts took special care to define the Protestant Church and the Catholic Church as victims and opponents of Hitler throughout the 1950s. However, in reality, the majority of the German Protestant Church had been actively pro-Nazi, with only a small minority of “the Confessing Church” opposing the regime. Nor had the Catholic Church initially been opposed to Nazism, with Hitler signing a Concordat with the Vatican in 1933.¹³² Despite these historical facts, the 1951 edition *Kletts* Form A cited the “increasing *resistance of both churches*” to the Nazis, which led the party to declare war against the churches, leading to attempts to remove religious instruction in schools and also to the incarceration of clergymen in concentration camps.¹³³ Such a depiction was unsurprising given the dominance of Adenauer’s CDU, which drew much of its support from religious voters, during this decade; indeed, the *Kletts* texts drew heavily from the center-right tradition. Church resistance—especially by Bishops von Galen and Würm—was increasingly emphasized over the course of the 1950s in the *Kletts* texts, with the 1959 Form B edition making it very clear that the “churches close themselves especially to the National

¹³⁰ Theoretically, I am borrowing from Maurice Halbwachs. *Maurice Halbwachs, On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). Pinnow and Textor, *Um Volksstaat Und Völkergemeinschaft*, 193. Karl Heinz Menzel and Fritz Textor, *Staatensystem und Weltpolitik*, 1 ed., *Kletts geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für die Mittelklassen. Ausgabe C* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1983), 132.

¹³¹ Hobsbawm, in *The Invention of Tradition*.

¹³² Matthew D. Hockenos, *Church Divided: German Protestants Confront the Nazi Past* (Bloomington, IN, USA: Indiana University Press, 2004), 17. Susan Zuccotti, *Under His Very Windows: The Vatican and the Holocaust in Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

¹³³ Pinnow and Textor, *Geschichte der neuesten Zeit: Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zur Gegenwart*, 147.

Socialist racial ideology.”¹³⁴ Thus, the churches were portrayed as uninfected by the Nazi scourge and true bastions of moral character.

Active and passive resistance to the regime may have been highlighted, in part, because *Kletts* author Fritz Textor had embarrassing links to the Nazi past. Textor (1911-1988) had become a member of the SA in 1933 and a member of the Nazi party in 1937.¹³⁵ He had even been sent to occupied Belgium and Northern France as part of the Cultural Department of German military command.¹³⁶ Perhaps it was Textor’s active involvement in Nazi activities that led him to distance the general population from “all the actions of the party,” writing in the 1956-1967 editions of *Kletts* Form B that “the people long ago did not agree with all actions of the party and its numerous organizations. In the face of meaningless or immoral orders, officers and officials either did not act at all or did not act as required.”¹³⁷

Thus, West Germany relied on a variety of coping mechanisms as it educated its youth in the postwar era. The idea of German victimization, the downplaying of the number of German victims, the protestations of the innocence of the ordinary German, and the overemphasis on military and clerical resistance were essential to West German grappling with the painful concept of an “internal other.”

¹³⁴ Pinnow and Textor, *Um Volksstaat und Völkergemeinschaft*, 163.

¹³⁵ Harmut Breyer, "Bürgermeister untersucht Vorwurf gegen Dr. Fritz Textor," *Westdeutsche allgemeine Zeitung* 2014, <http://www.derwesten.de/staedte/ennepetal/buergermeister-untersucht-vorwurf-gegen-dr-fritz-textor-id8940578.html>.

¹³⁶ Ulrich Pfeil, "Fritz Textor (1911-1988): Vor einem „Westforscher“ der zweiten Generation," *Geschichte im Westen* 30 (2015). Breyer, "Dr. Fritz Textor war vehementer Gegner der Entnazifizierung."

¹³⁷ Pinnow and Textor, *Um Volksstaat und Völkergemeinschaft*, 201-02.

The Turn of the Decade

Beginning in the late 1950s, the West German educational system's inadequate coverage of the recent past received increasing public attention and criticism.¹³⁸ When in 1959, a synagogue in Cologne was defaced by antisemitic slogans, this act was attributed to the youth's ignorance of the Third Reich. These events combined with a variety of other factors—including the 1958 Ulm trial, 1959 arrest of Adolf Eichmann, and a generational changing of the guard—and prompted the KMK to release new educational guidelines on how order to inculcate students with a constitutional-democratic spirit. As a result, textbooks produced in the 1960s began to reflect a greater critical engagement with the Third Reich.¹³⁹

This spirit of change in the 1960s textbooks has not been acknowledged by all scholars. Falk Pingel characterized the 1950s through the early 1960s as a “period of stabilization.” During this time period, he argued that “the extermination of the Jews was not treated in separate paragraphs but seen as a component of warfare in general.” He asserted that West German textbooks' depictions of the Holocaust only began to change late in 1960s.¹⁴⁰ Brian Puaca, however, disagreed, arguing in 2015 that changes could be seen as early as 1961 and that the 1960s as a whole should be seen as a “critical stage of transition in Germans coming to terms

¹³⁸ The documentary *Blick auf unsere Jugend* (Focus on Our Youth) aired on West German TV in April 1959; it found that in a class of thirty-three *Gymnasium* students questioned by the filmmaker Juergen Neven-DuMont, only thirteen said that they knew many Jews had been killed during National Socialism. Only nine of these students presented “reasonably accurate” responses. John Dornberg, *Schizophrenic Germany* (New York: Macmillan, 1961), 197-98.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 206, 17; Rodden, 129; Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, *Richtlinien für die Behandlung des Totalitarismus im Unterricht* (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1962). Meseth, 19-20.

¹⁴⁰ Pingel, in *What Shall We Tell the Children?: International Perspectives on School History Textbooks*, 135.

with their recent past in the schools of the Federal Republic.”¹⁴¹ The case study of *Kletts* leads to a periodization that is far more in line with Puaca than with Pingel.

The 1960 *Kletts* Form B featured a complete rewrite of several important sections, as well as new additions that gave increased focus to the Nazis’ Jewish victims. The 1960 Form B edition featured the addition of two sections—“The Persecution of the Jews,” which described the effects of the 1935 Nuremberg race laws, and the 1938 *Kristallnacht* pogrom and “The Final Solution of the Jewish Question,” which included a description of the death camps.¹⁴² Both these sections would be subject to modification over the course of the decade, but a clear sea change took place in the 1960 printing. The 1960 Form B edition presents the historian with the rare opportunity to pinpoint exactly when a change took place.

That said, one must be cautious not to attribute too much progress to the 1960 edition. Although the 1960 version of the section “The Final Solution of the Jewish Question” featured the very first exact numbers as to how many Jews died in the Holocaust, the authors also employed some downward bargaining. Even though the number of six million was cited, “another Jewish calculation” of 4.2 to 4.6 million was also included. The text concluded, “There is no telling if further research will arrive at another figure.”¹⁴³ Nevertheless, the Nazis’ racial victims were slowly coming to the fore.

Coupled with this increased discussion of the victims was an increased discussion of the resistance. The expanded resistance narrative that premiered in the 1959 edition continued throughout the later forms of Form B (published until 1967). The narrative took on an even

¹⁴¹ Puaca, “Mastering the Past? Nazism and the Holocaust in West German Textbooks of the 1960s,” in *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice*.

¹⁴² Hermann Pinnow and Fritz Textor, *Um Volksstaat und Völkergemeinschaft*, vol. 4, *Kletts geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für die Mittelklassen, Ausgabe B* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1960), 164, 91-92.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 191-92.

more messianic dimension in the 1960 edition, with a new paragraph featuring quotations from Stauffenberg and General Major von Tresckow, in which the two conspirators explained their motivations for the July 20th plot. Tresckow is quoted saying after the plot:

Now the whole world will attack and abuse us. But I am still of the fervent belief that we dealt with it correctly. I regard Hitler not only as the nemesis of Germany, but also the nemesis of the world. When of yore God promised Abraham that he would not destroy Sodom, if only ten righteous men were within, I hope also that because of us, God will not annihilate Germany.¹⁴⁴

Every schoolchild would have known that after the plot's failure, the conspirators were either executed or driven to commit suicide. Although Tresckow's reference was to the Book of Genesis, the idea of a righteous man who died to redeem the sins of the nation would have certainly made students think of another biblical figure. Thus, the textbooks' increasing admission of complicity was accompanied by an increasingly messianic resistance narrative.

Ordinary People

The introduction of Form C in 1968 marked the last large change in the *Kletts* narrative. Afterwards, the text remained identical from 1968 to 1983.¹⁴⁵ The 1968 edition of Form C featured some larger innovations, including increased discussion of the Nazi crimes and racial victims. It also featured as a modified resistance narrative, which allowed for the inclusion of new individuals, previously ignored in the 1950s and the 1960s because of the Cold War.

¹⁴⁴ This is a reference to Genesis 18:16- 33.

¹⁴⁵ I reached this conclusion through line-by-line comparison of selected sections in the 1968, 1977, and 1983 editions. The Georg Eckert Institute of International Textbook Research (GEI) also has the textbook catalogued as undergoing no revisions during this period. 1983 was the last edition collected by the GEI and, as far as I know, the last edition printed.

However, what most characterizes the textbooks of this period was the prominent narrative tension between representing ordinary people's complicity and resistance.

Firstly, Form C featured increased discussion the crimes against the Nazis' racial victims. It outlined in much greater detail the persecution of the Jews from 1933 onward, describing their exclusion from the civil service, the Nuremberg Race Laws, and the 1938 *Kristallnacht* pogrom, as well as the resulting Jewish emigration.¹⁴⁶ Discussion of the Final Solution was also expanded in Form C. Form B had presented the extermination of the Jews as if it had only taken place in Auschwitz. It had used a quote from historian Gerald Reitlinger's *The Final Solution* to introduce the idea of the gas chambers. However, the quote had been presented with almost no background or analysis.¹⁴⁷ In contrast, Form C presented the death camps in the full context of the Nazis' plan to exterminate the Jews of Europe. Form C marked the first mention of the Wannsee Conference, whose protocol was extensively quoted. It also mentioned the fact that there were various death camps, naming both Auschwitz and Treblinka. Form C also marked the introduction of the mobile killing squads (*Einsatzkommandos*) into the narrative, as well as the addition of the Roma (referred to in the text as the Gypsies) as victims of the Nazi terror.¹⁴⁸

Such detailed descriptions of rather obvious and heinous crimes raised the question why the German population had done little or nothing to stop this wrongdoing. Form C, unlike Forms A and B, alluded to the fact that most people stood by while their neighbors were rounded up in

¹⁴⁶ Karl Heinz Menzel and Fritz Textor, *Staatensystem Und Weltpolitik*, 1 ed., *Kletts geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für die Mittelklassen, Ausgabe C* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1968), 108-09.

¹⁴⁷ Although the textbook cited Reitlinger's work, I could not locate the direct quote in the cited source. Hermann Pinnow and Fritz Textor, *Um Volksstaat und Völkergemeinschaft*, [7] ed., vol. 4, *Kletts geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für die Mittelklassen, Ausgabe B* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1967; repr., [13]), 191-92. See: Gerald Reitlinger, *Die Endlösung: Hitlers Versuch der Ausrottung der Juden Europas 1939-1945* (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1953).

¹⁴⁸ Menzel and Textor, *Staatensystem und Weltpolitik*, 130-31.

the discussion question that followed the section on the 1938 *Kristallnacht* pogrom: “Why did the Jews not find more help among the population?”¹⁴⁹ That said, while the textbook subtly admitted that the general population offered little help to the persecuted Jews, it was definitive on the idea that the German people had not supported the 1938 pogrom. The textbook stated, “Goebbels made it so the riots seemed to be the spontaneous expression of the people’s fury, but in reality the German people disapproved of this action”¹⁵⁰ The general population was thus presented as bystanders, but disapproving ones.

While Form C admitted that the general German populace knew about discrimination against the Jews and *Kristallnacht*, it maintained that most Germans had not known about the death camps. Form C contended that the death camps had been created to keep “the ghastly undertaking... secret also from one one’s people as much as possible”¹⁵¹ Discrimination and *Kristallnacht* had openly taken place on German city streets. By 1968, West German textbooks could no longer contend that no non-Jewish German had seen these acts happen. Yet, mass murder in the East had been removed from most German civilians’ wartime experiences. Thus, Form C continued to maintain that few Germans had been aware of it.

These openings in the discussion of German complicity did not mean that the resistance narrative fell away. Instead, it held a very important resonance in this history textbook well into the 1980s, with the July 20th *putsch* and the Churches’ resistance activities still emphasized as the “other Germany.”¹⁵² However, the textbooks’ narrative changed over time, with the resistance narrative increasingly coexisting with an admission that most ordinary people had not

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 109.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 130.

¹⁵² Ibid., 106-07, 31-32.

resisted the National Socialist regime. This narrative tension between ordinary Germans' complicity and resistance was epitomized in a KMK resolution that was published in 1980. In the resolution, the KMK instructed, "It must be shown that capitulation to dictatorship frequently began not with spectacular defeats but with small, everyday acts of cowardice. By the same token, it must be shown that everyday life was also the special province of silent resistance without no image of the Third Reich would be complete."¹⁵³ This guideline also showed a shift in pedagogical emphasis from structural to social history.

Another way that the resistance narrative changed over time was in its increasing acknowledgment of the Leftist political orientations of some of its participants. In Form C, increased attention was paid to Hitler's communist and socialist opponents. For example, a picture of Dr. Julius Leber had initially appeared in the 1960 edition of Form B with the simple caption, "Dr. Julius Leber (SPD; Member of the Reichstag 1924-1933) before the People's Court"¹⁵⁴ This left the reader with almost no context of who Leber was, why he had been before the People's Court, or if he, as an SPD party member, had been a sympathetic or unsympathetic figure. The caption in the 1967 Form C provided the student with far more explication:

Dr. Julius Leber in front of the People's court. He was born in Alsace in 1891, joined the SPD in 1913, was an officer in the First World War and served until 1920 in the border patrol in the East. Since 1924 he belonged to the Reichstag; since 1933 he was multiple times in detention and in concentration camps. He was executed in the beginning of 1945.¹⁵⁵

Form C also featured a new section, not seen in Form B, that explained that "thousands of communists and socialists were brought to *concentration camps*... As early as 1933 around

¹⁵³ Sekretariat der Ständigen Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, *Recommendation on the Treatment of the Resistance During the National Socialist Period in Teaching* (1980).

¹⁵⁴ Pinnow and Textor, *Um Volksstaat und Völkergemeinschaft*, 193.

¹⁵⁵ Menzel and Textor, *Staatsystem und Weltpolitik*, 132.

62,000 prisoners arrived; of them over 6,000 died in the same year, mostly from maltreatment.”¹⁵⁶ The profiling of Julius Leber and the admission that many socialists and communists had been Hitler’s first political opponents and victims showed a new space in the resistance narrative for those who subscribed to a Leftist political ideology, similar to what was seen during “opening to the Left” in 1960s Italy. This coincided with an increasing normalization of relations between East and West Germany, known as *Ostpolitik*, as well as the political ascendancy of the SPD-FPD coalition.¹⁵⁷

This is not to say that West German textbooks were overly embracing of communism. The 1968 edition also included echoes of totalitarian theory, developed by Hannah Arendt, in its statement that many German churchmen feared both a German and a Soviet victory because “Hitler’s victory meant more fights and persecution, with his defeat, however, would more German territory await repression under Bolshevism.”¹⁵⁸ This sort of equation of National Socialism and Communism was articulated in a 1962 KMK resolution, which stated that students needed to be taught about the characteristics of totalitarianism, as well as “Bolshevism and National Socialism as the most important totalitarian systems of the 20th century.” These guidelines were referenced in a 1978 KMK resolution and were only classified as outdated in 1991.¹⁵⁹ They were clearly influential throughout the entire scope of this study. Communists, apparently were only acceptable in West German textbooks when they were fighting the Nazis.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 100.

¹⁵⁷ Wolfgram, 113-14, 53, 54; Sierp, 50.

¹⁵⁸ Menzel and Textor, *Staatensystem und Weltpolitik*, 107. See: Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1951).

¹⁵⁹ *Richtlinien Für Die Behandlung Des Totalitarismus im Unterricht*. Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, *Treatment of National Socialism in Teaching* (1978).

The focus on the resistance was not new in Form C; what was new was the justification for it. No longer was resistance only tied to the national state. It took on a supranational meaning. Human rights were now added to the mix. A 1980 KMK resolution stated,

In schools and in political education, the treatment of resistance against the National Socialist reign of violence pursues the goal of keeping the memories alive, communicating basic historic knowledge and heightening powers of political judgement. The examination of the resistance should strengthen respect for human rights, political and moral responsibility and active support for a system in which various political and ideological direction can coexist¹⁶⁰

By now a relatively well-established state, West Germany no longer relied on the resistance struggle against the Nazis quite as heavily as a foundational narrative. It was now free to take on some new meanings.

The radical changes that took place between the 1967 Form B and the 1968 Form C raise the question: why then? Many historians have identified 1968, with its student revolts, as a turning point for West German memory culture, but the way textbooks were composed in West Germany suggests that changes to the textbook narrative must have been brewing *before* this momentous year. These changes *cannot* be attributed to the student protestors and their vague criticism of the West German state's handling of the fascist past. I hypothesize that these changes were not so much in response to the student protestors and more in response to a series of high profile trials of Nazi war criminals in the late 1950s and the 1960s, as well as the rise of the political Left; the SPD, which favored a greater critical engagement with the past joined a coalition government with the CDU in 1966 and became the most powerful party in 1969.¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ *Recommendation on the Treatment of the Resistance During the National Socialist Period in Teaching.*

¹⁶¹These war crimes trials included the Ulm trial in 1958, the Eichmann trial in 1961, and the Auschwitz trials of 1963-1965. A very public display of the Left's desire to address West German responsibility for Nazi crimes was SPD Chancellor Willy Brandt's 1970 visit to the Warsaw Ghetto, upon which he fell to his knees. Sierp, 50; Wulf Kansteiner, "Losing the War, Winning the Memory Battle: The Legacy of Nazism, World War II and the Holocaust in the Federal Republic of Germany," in *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, ed. Richard Ted Lebow; Wulf Kansteiner; Claudio Fogu (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 118.

These textbook shifts also reflected trends in West German historiography in the early 1960s toward emphasizing the specific Jewish identities of Nazi victims reflected a shift in general historiography of the Third Reich and the Holocaust, stimulated by the 1961 publication of Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jews*.¹⁶² A nascent dialogue about human rights and the stabilization of the West German state likely also played a role.

Most importantly, the version of the text that was published in 1968 was clearly considered appropriate through early to mid-1980s. Form C underwent no changes during its entire publication run. Inspection of the KMK guidelines published in the intervening period concludes that the 1968 *Kletts* Form C conformed to how the West German government felt that the recent past should be taught. The case study of the *Kletts* middle school textbook suggests that we should reevaluate our conceptions of when West German started to take a hard look at itself; it seems that was earlier than previously imagined.

¹⁶² Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961).

CONCLUSION

The Second World War was a clear breaking point for all three countries considered in this paper; out of the rubble, new states emerged. When creating a narrative for the postwar, East Germany, West Germany, and Italy had little positive in the recent national past from which to draw. However, as Maurice Halbwachs explained, new structures can only be “elaborated in the shadow of the old.”¹⁶³ So, how does a country pull from a past that is so shameful?

The three countries employed lenses through which to view the past, lenses that served their contemporary needs. To borrow from Halbwachs again, the past was not actually “preserved, but... reconstructed on the basis of the present.”¹⁶⁴ East Germany employed a *socialist lens*, interpreting the National Socialism and its crimes in the context of the class struggle. Italy employed a *patriotic lens*, presenting the last two years of the Second World War as a “war of liberation” against a foreign foe. Both East Germany and Italy’s lenses stayed relatively undisturbed between 1949 and 1989; thus the textbook narratives, themselves, changed only a little, as a result. In contrast, West Germany, unable to externalize blame as easily as the other two, was eventually forced into a more self-critical approach. Though by no means perfect, West Germany’s textbook narrative’s *malleable lens* increasingly recognized and taught students about how ordinary people can become complicit to criminal regime.

Despite these differences, however, there were also some major similarities between the textbook narratives employed by East Germany, Italy and West Germany—primarily in their

¹⁶³ Halbwachs, 125.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 39-40.

discussions of resistance. These three countries all needed to find something in the wartime past upon which to build their postwar states; thus, they turned to the resistance. They created a sort of mythological redemptive narrative centering around “the other Germany” or “the other Italy” and portrayed themselves as the inheritors of that past.¹⁶⁵ As Eric Hobsbawm wrote, “Modern nations and all their impedimenta generally claim to be the opposite of novel, namely rooted in the remotest antiquity, and the opposite of constructed.”¹⁶⁶ Although these countries were pulling from the not so distant past and not the “remotest antiquity,” they enshrined themselves as heirs to an invented resistance tradition. However, the narratives and “invented traditions” were sometimes contradictory to one another; the East German-West German dispute over the July 20th conspirators was a clash of two opposing nation-reorienting narratives.

The narratives were also all somewhat transitory. Jay Winter observed of commemorative sites, “Constructing sites of memory is a universal social act, and yet these very sites are as transitory as the groups of people who create and sustain them.”¹⁶⁷ The same could be said of textbooks. The textbook narratives changed in response to domestic shifts in power and transnational events—such as the Ulm, Eichmann, and Auschwitz trials, as well as the 1980s Holocaust memory boom. These transnational events were filtered through the specific narrative lens that each country employed and textbook narratives in each country changed as a result. West Germany’s narrative was far more malleable because a less consistent and simplistic lens was employed there. Furthermore, more conflicting voices were involved in the shaping of public memory. However, shifts can be observed even in East Germany and Italy, as seen in East

¹⁶⁵ Wolfgram, 106.

¹⁶⁶ Hobsbawm, in *The Invention of Tradition*, 14.

¹⁶⁷ Jay Winter, “Site of Memory and the Shadow of War,” in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, Media and Cultural Memory (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 73.

Germany's later embrace of the historical personage of Colonel Graf von Stauffenberg and the greater prominence given to Nazi racial victims in both countries' textbooks in the 1980s.

No country's textbook storyline was invariable, but the reasons for West Germany's greater success in presenting a more self-critical narrative can only truly be seen in comparison to East Germany and Italy. The results of this three country comparison support the importance of an internal lens in inculcating youth with democratized values and a self-critical view towards the past. This understanding, historically significant on its own, becomes even more vital given the rise in right-wing ethno-nationalism across the world in recent years.

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